Understanding contemporary craft work

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The concept of craft is central to understanding work and organizations. Commentaries on the values associated with craft, and how they have been eroded by capitalism and globalization, underpin classic theories of organization including Taylorism and Marxism, and inform key organizational concepts such as deskilling (Braverman 1974) and McDonaldization (Ritzer 1995). The endurance and recent flourishing of craft as a way of thinking about work invites consideration of how it has been understood historically, as well as how it is practiced and managed today. This edited volume therefore focuses on the organization of craft work. It considers the importance of craft as a way of understanding work and as a source of cultural meaning.

It is usual at the start of a book such as this to set out what we mean by craft work. However, craft is not a pre-given category that is open to precise delimitation. It is therefore important to avoid 'pedantic semantics' (Miller 2010), in the pursuit of a definition of craft work where a single definition does not exist. Hence, we approach craft interpretively, as a phenomenon

that is culturally and socially constructed, as the result of agreed upon patterns of action and language that are the outcome of social relations. Consequently, continually emerges and is inextricably linked to the socio-cultural, economic and historical conditions of its production. We also need to consider the structural conditions within which craft work is located (Giddens 1984), including state policy frameworks and wider economic and political conditions that contribute towards the current moment in which craft is celebrated, or even fetishized.

Crafted things are assumed to be made with love and care (Rowley 1997). The beauty that accrues to such crafted objects is understood to be *haptic*, arising from touch, *optic*, related to sight, and *cognitive*, related to concepts, ideas and suggestions (Smith 1997). Combined with these aesthetic values, craft (unlike art) is characterised by the making of functional objects that serve a useful purpose (Becker 1978). In contrast to automated processes of production where there is a high level of certainty and standardization about the outcome, the objects of craftwork cannot be accurately predetermined. This is what British designer and woodworker David Pye (1995) refers to as the 'workmanship of risk'[i]. Craft work involves celebrating the imperfections associated with the execution of thought by hand (Ullrich 2004). The realisation of these values is understood to depend on the experience of the maker, whose 'virtuoso' skills (Becker 1978) are the result of continuous practice. Acquired virtuosity involves the body as well as the mind of the craft worker, in using raw materials, tools and techniques to make things. In so doing, notions of craft problematize the longstanding Cartesian dualism that elevates the rational, disembodied mind and separates it from the body. These values are important in providing the foundations that inform the organization of contemporary craft work.

Craft is also a discourse that contributes to the social world and our identities within it (Phillips & Hardy 2002; see Luckman 2015a). Viewing craft in this way focuses attention on the embodiment and enactment of craft discourses through historically and socially situated talk and texts. These discourses are used to personalise relationships between producers and consumers. The mockumentary film '*How to Sharpen Pencils*'[ii] features an 'artisanal pencil sharpening business' owner. As well as demonstrating the mundane task of how to sharpen pencils, the pencil sharpening businessman demonstrates 'traditional sharpening tools' (i.e. a knife), and an elaborate display tube into which the sharpened pencil is placed to be shipped to the customer, together with a detailed record of when, where and how and by whom the pencil was sharpened. Through parodying the discourse of craft this text draws attention to their popularity and pervasiveness. Such texts thereby provide an insight into how the meaning of craft work is constructed, brought into being and contested.

The remainder of this introduction focuses on the contestation that surrounds the meaning and practice of contemporary craft work organization. Through exploring the nature of this contestation, we introduce three enduring themes from organization studies which we suggest enable understanding of how craft work is organized: identities, meanings and materiality. By tracing the historical significance of each of these themes, we show how they enable understanding of the revival of craft work as a way of thinking about production and consumption today. We conclude this introduction by briefly summarising the chapters that comprise the rest of the book.

Contestation in craft work organization

During the past decade, there has been a flourishing of the term 'craft' to refer to a wide range of products and services (Freyling 2011; Luckman 2015a). The language of craft is invoked by a wide range of organizations, from long established family businesses to eco-friendly pop-up enterprises. In fashionable districts of cities across Europe, North America and Australasia, there can be found numerous examples of small independent, artisanal businesses making bespoke, handmade, handcrafted, small-batch products in order to appeal to the tastes of craft-conscious, elite professional consumers. These organizations claim that the things they sell are made with love, care and attention to detail.

A key source of meaning which attributions of craft share relies on distancing and differentiating products from mass-manufactured, globalized, mechanised processes of industrial production. This dichotomy is based on the implicit assumption that craft values and practices have been eroded by the separation of mental and manual tasks caused by the mechanisation and division of labour under Fordism and Taylorism which resulted in deskilling and alienation. Craftwork is thereby represented as an antidote to dominant twentieth century organizing principles of modernist mechanised industrial production and mass consumerism which, in the nineteenth century, resulted in the 'death of the Artisan Republic' as a moral and political force (Hanlon 2016).

Yet global multinational corporations are also laying claim to craft work. An example is provided by IKEA, the world's largest furniture retailer, which recently introduced a handmade product collection[iii]. The collection includes hand woven textiles, pottery and handmade paper products, produced by artisans in rural areas of Thailand. Objects are advertised as unique, produced respecting local traditions and communities. IKEA's craft range is a departure from the organization's core brand and purpose, which appears to be

modelled on the principles of McDonaldization – efficiency, predictability, calculability and non-human technology (Ritzer 1995). In so doing it highlights the contested meaning which surrounds craft. This raises the question of whether craft can be distinguished according to the outputs and attributes of products that are 'handmade' or 'handcrafted' on a small scale, or from the spaces, processes and relationships that entangle the maker in the world (Holt & Popp 2016). If the former, then the scale of making and the type of organization that is engaged in craft work is less significant. If the latter, more philosophically and ethically informed perspective is taken, then companies like IKEA may be understood as cynically co-opting craft simply to sell more stuff.

The contested nature of craft work is thus driven by ideological concerns (Becker 1978), including by the desire to find alternatives to global capitalist models of production and consumption (Parker et al. 2014). The pursuit of alternative ways of organizing craft work has led to innovative approaches to business financialization, such as crowdfunding campaigns. For example, UK craft beer company BrewDog has developed a means of raising capital through its 'Equity Punks' scheme, now in its fourth iteration. Consumers are invited to pledge cash to the company in exchange for community and membership benefits and an implicit prospect of profiting from owning a 'share' in the company. A sense of community is maintained with 'shareholders' through regular email contact and an online members' area. The ideology on which this alternative financial model draws is inspired by countercultural rhetoric (Frank 1997), as expressed in the BrewDog Manifesto: '*We are on a mission to make other people as passionate about great craft beer as we are. We bleed craft beer. This is our true North. We are uncompromising. If we don't love it, we don't do it. Ever. We blow shit up. We are ambitious, we are relentless, we take risks…*'[iv].

But while businesses such as this might seem to be using craft ideology in a way which enables alternatives to conventional shareholder capitalism, the tenuous nature of these logics is also evident. In 2017 BrewDog failed to raise sufficient equity in a US-based crowdfunding round and turned to a conventional venture capital firm to make up the shortfall needed to complete a new brewery and retail facility. The promotion of an ideology of craft as a radical alternative to corporate capitalism was transformed overnight into a relatively conventional approach to business organization. This suggests that craft ideologies are just another iteration of the countercultural 'artistic critique' that emerged in the 1960s and '70s. While craft work appears to enable liberation from the inauthentic, managerial spirit, ultimately its fate appears always to be co-optation by capitalism (Boltanski & Chiapello 2005).

Examples like this, and the commercial growth that craft sometimes appears to enable, have contributed to instances of backlash. A recent McDonald's marketing campaign represents artisanal coffee as slow, unnecessarily complicated and expensive, an indulgence more oriented towards satisfying the 'hipster'[v] maker than the person buying it. This provides the basis for contrast with the ostensibly straightforward, reasonably priced, reliable coffee at McDonald's [vi]. Backlash is also associated with the 'fake' or inauthentic use of craft. For example, Mast Brothers is a successful artisanal chocolatier headquartered in Brooklyn, New York. The company makes 'bean to bar' chocolate, a term that refers to a chocolate making process where the producer retains control at every stage, from sourcing the cocoa beans to the finished wrapped bar. Founded by two bearded 'hipster' brothers from Iowa, the self-taught chocolatiers describe themselves as dedicated to 'meticulous craftsmanship'. Mast Brothers set up their New York chocolate factory in 2007. Since then the company has grown into a global business, with stores in London and Los Angeles.

In 2015 Mast Brothers were the focus of complaints that alleged they had not always made chocolate from scratch. Instead the brothers were accused by chocolate industry insiders of purchasing mass-produced chocolate from a well-known French manufacturer and re-melting it. It appeared that the success of Mast Brothers was founded on sophisticated marketing and beautiful packaging, rather than skillful making from raw ingredients from a known source[vii]. The inauthenticity of these organizational practices was further emphasized through the fact that customers were able to visit the Mast Brothers Williamsburg factory to witness the chocolate making process. Such 'staged scenes of making that give consumers direct access to the site of production' (Dudley 2014: 104) are relatively common in craft work organizations. Yet as the example of Mast Brothers highlights, such practices may be an instance of Disneyization (Bryman 2004) that transforms craft into an 'experience' or staged performance which bears little resemblance to actual practices or experiences of making.

This highlights the contestation of authenticity that surrounds craft. Rather than avoiding the manipulative intent (Thrift 2008) associated with 'the artificially constructed world of typical corporate communication' (Schroeder 2012: 129), such examples emphasize that craft discourses are being used precisely to convey an image that belies the reality of production. Despite producers' claims of 'honesty' 'transparency' and 'integrity', and the apparent visibility of craft making, such organizational practices generate an 'authenticity paradox' (Guthey & Jackson 2005) that exposes the organization's chronic *lack* of authenticity. This is related to the seductive cultural nostalgia that surrounds craft discourses (Luckman 2015a) which encourages articulation of a romantic desire to return to a former way of life that was more stable, secure, and meaningful.

Craft work is thus a complex and contested activity where meaning and value is shaped by historical, sociocultural and economic conditions. The purpose of this volume is to explore these multiple, contested meanings in a range of organizational contexts. In the following section, we take the resurgent contemporary popularity of craft as an opportunity to investigate the meaning of craft work as a material practice and reflect upon the organizational identity work that these discourses enable.

Why craft, why now?

The widespread revival of craft in the twenty-first century tells us something about the current *zeitgeist*, or spirit of the times. Specifically, the current craft revival channels *fin de siècle* cultural fears that the nature and meaning of work, and what can be achieved through it, is fundamentally changing. Craft work discourses are associated with questioning of industrial capitalism in periods of rapid change. The can be seen from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Arts and Crafts Movement in the UK, Europe and the USA. This was underpinned by philosophies developed through art critic John Ruskin's (1909) political economic critique of mechanized industrial development in England, and the destruction of landscape and people that it wrought. Led by public advocates such as William Morris, who sought progressive social reform in the UK based on opposition to mass production and the pursuit of alternatives to alienated labour (Greenhalgh 1997; Krugh 2014), the Movement was associated with an antimodernist sentiment which questioned the logic of scientific and technological progress as the basis for living a good life (Heidegger 1977). Such historical precedents as this are echoed within the current craft revival by authors such as Sennett (2008), arguing that the desire to do a job well is an enduring feature of the human condition.

This forms an aspect of a wider cultural positioning of craftwork as a means of overcoming worker alienation (Crawford 2009) and challenging consumerism (Luckman 2015a).

The craft revival is also related to predictions about the future of work, particularly the likely impact of technological developments in robotics and computing, and the anxieties that stem from this. Such developments are hailed as a threat to the need for human labour, judgment and interaction in many jobs. This includes white collar knowledge work which, it is argued, is becoming drained of its cognitive and creative elements (Crawford 2009; Sennett 2012), as well as manual jobs (Brynjolfsson & McAfee 2014). Ocejo (2017: 133) argues that certain traditional, low-status manual occupations, such as bartending, distilling, barbering and butchery, have come to occupy a special place in the new economy as symbols of a traditional era that represents the 'epitome of hipster culture'. These occupations are experienced not as a form of downward mobility by their predominantly male, middle-class occupants, but as a calling or vocation that relies on a 'sense of craft' that is based on technical skill and the ability to understand and communicate 'specialized knowledge' (p.135). As Crawford also argues, there is considerable appeal in 'tangible work that is straightforwardly useful' such that not only is it economically viable, but for many people it provides a 'greater sense of agency and competence' than other jobs 'officially recognized as "knowledge work"' (p.5). Craft work can thereby be interpreted as a reaction against technological advances that call into question the presumed naturalness of the human body in organizations.

This spirit has generated a revival of craft in popular culture. In the UK, TV series such as *The Great Pottery Throw Down* and *The Great British Sewing Bee* combine cultural nationalism and nostalgia for a former era when things were made by hand, locally and

imperfectly, in the home or in combined home-work spaces. In Austria, a recent exhibition entitled 'Handicraft: Traditional Skills in the Digital Age'[viii] at the Museum for Applied Arts in Vienna highlighted a further aspect of interest in craft as embodied making. This is fueled by the rise of global online crafting communities such as the Maker Movement or the Do-It-Yourself network. It includes the rise of craftivism, a social practice that relies on making things which speak to contemporary social, environmental and political issues, often through participatory, community-based projects. The utilization of craft as a source of resistance, protest and transformation (Greer, 2014; Black & Burisch, 2014) echoes former meanings of the term to suggest an ungovernable power (Dormer 1997), especially in relation to women and work (Wolfram Cox & Minahan 2007)[ix]. However, the extent to which the current craft revival is genuinely socially progressive, especially in relation to gender, is one of the questions that this volume seeks to address.

The revival of craft is also linked to economic conditions and the current geopolitical climate. The craft revival is shaped by new forms of populist politics driven by fears about migration and work. These political discourses focus on celebrating postindustrial regions such as the North American 'rustbelt', LaTrobe Valley in Australia, Southern Italy, Wales or the North East of England, promising to rescue them from economic decline. This includes the experience of local post-industrial communities that have been adversely affected by disinvestment in, and offshoring of, industry due to globalization (Strangleman 2017), such as mining or steelmaking. Craft work provides an opportunity through which policy makers and politicians in the UK have sought to rebuild communities and create employment (Jakob & Thomas 2015). In some cases, this involves returning to and resurrecting sites and buildings used to make things in the past, such as in the recent regeneration of a Victorian

cotton mill in Manchester in the UK to produce luxury yarn for domestic and overseas markets[x].

This leads us to a further aspect of the craft revival which concerns its potential role in the development of more sustainable economies (Luckman 2015a). This alternative economy of craft work organization is closely associated with eco-localism and place-based approaches to production and consumption, which attempt to address the intertwined crises of climate change and 'peak oil' (Ganesh & Zoller 2014). The importance of place within craft work discourses is captured by the notion of 'provenance', tracing objects to the places and people who made them. The presence of craft discourses in such contexts, reflects a desire to move away from continuous, conspicuous consumption, in-built obsolescence (Packard 1963) and disposability, towards the development of local and virtual networks that foster mutually reinforcing patterns of production and consumption. This aspect of the craft revival chimes with contemporary notions of 'peak stuff'[xi], 'voluntary simplicity' and 'degrowth' by ascribing value to a life based on constrained production and consumption of material objects as the basis for enhanced subjective wellbeing (Curry 2011). Examples of craft practices associated with alternative economies include 'post-growth fashion' which is based on the idea of 'craft of use', involving creative, ingenious and resourceful adaptation of garments in ways that are satisfying to self and others (Fletcher 2016). The priority within such practices of making is *usership*, rather than *ownership,* as a source of pleasure and delight[xii].

At the same time, the inherently contradictory nature of the craft revival means the term also operates as a marker of wealth and class, enabling a form of conspicuous consumption based on the value of embodied labour. Luxury brands such as the Italian fashion label Salvatore Ferragamo use the terms 'craft' and 'handmade' as markers of taste and distinction (Bourdieu

1984) that attribute ‘honorific value’ (Veblen 1997) to crafted objects in a way which enables consumers to distinguish themselves from others (Simmel 1957). Data collected by one of us as part of a recent fieldwork project about craft work in the UK confirms this: managers suggested that the appeal of handmade shoes and bicycles offers wealthy global elites a way differentiating themselves through the connoisseurship of knowing where and how things are made and how their quality is measured (Dudley 2014), in a world where even luxury brands are ubiquitous and provide insufficient distinction. This aspect of the craft revival directly contracts the use of the term to indicate pursuit of more sustainable approaches to production and consumption. Rather, and as Simmel reminds us, ‘the attraction of’ crafted objects will continue to ‘desert the present article just as it left the earlier one’ (ibid: 556).

Embedded practices of local making in a place are contrasted with globalized, environmentally damaged, terrorized and masculinized societies (Wolfram Cox & Minahan 2007). The tactility of craft work intersects with creativity in a way which is productive of memory and affective relationships with objects (Vachhani 2013).

Craft work and organization studies: Identities, meanings and materiality

Understanding contemporary craft work organization relies on cross-disciplinary engagement between academic disciplines. Consistent with this notion, the chapters in this book are written by researchers in the fields of marketing, strategy, entrepreneurship and organization studies, working alongside human geographers, cultural studies scholars and researchers in fashion and design, and craft practitioners. Before engaging in this cross-disciplinary conversation, we consider how organization studies contributes towards understanding craft work. Our discussion relates to three themes - identities, meanings and materiality.

Identities

The theme of identities relates to the role of craft in 'people's subjectively construed understandings of who they were, are and desire to become' (Brown 2015: 20). Several of the chapters in this book show how identities are being shaped by prevailing craft discourses. This includes consideration of how craft work discourses are used by individuals to construct a coherent sense of self, as well as by organizations, to construct an identity that appeals to members and consumers. Embodied and aesthetic identities of craft workers are increasingly being mobilized in the marketing of crafted and handmade products. Representations of craft workers in marketing campaigns is a form of aesthetic labour (Warhurst & Nickson 2009) that involves incorporation of employees' physical selves into the brand (Land & Taylor 2010).

The identity work involved in craft organization draws on narratives (Czarniawska 1998) through which workers and consumers seek to account for their lives and actions. Meaning is also constructed through marketing narratives which explain the role of craft workers in processes of making, often accompanied by beautiful images of craft work and craft workers' bodies. Hence the meaning of craft work is constructed through consumption of the craft worker and their visual representation, as much as by the crafted object itself. The virtual sphere is an important locale in the construction and circulation of stories of making. For example, online craft selling platform Etsy creates connections between makers and consumers and gives consumers the opportunity to own objects that possess a story[xiii]. American crowdfunding websites for creative projects like Indiegogo and Kickstarter, also draw on stories to provide meaning, placing emphasis on the life narratives of creative workers who use the sites to seek funding for their projects. A key feature of craft worker

identity narratives concerns their entrepreneurial nature; Etsy defines sellers as 'empowering, flexible entrepreneurs'[xiv]. This positions craft work as a project of the enterprising self, in an era when worker identity is less stable (du Gay 1996). Craft work is thus an identity practice that is characterized by entrepreneurial risk-taking (Dudley 2014) as a way of carving out alternatives to mainstream employment (Crawford 2009) by branding the self in a context of increased economic precarity.

The building of craft work identities based on entrepreneurial subjectivity also relies on eroding the boundaries between work and leisure and co-opting the home as a site of capitalism (Luckman 2015b). The significance of the home as a place of craft work has a long history in the gendering of craft work identities (Callen 1984; Wolfram Cox & Minahan 2007). The development of industrial capitalism in the nineteenth century positioned craft work as a domestic, community-based, small-scale activity which was the domain of women (Greenhalgh 1997). It was only after the growth of industrial organization that the organization of activities such as brewing (Thurnell-Read 2014) and pottery making (Whipp 1985) were taken out of the home and into large factories. Under these conditions, the production of beer became increasingly masculinized, as companies employed only men and advertising was targeted at male industrial workers (Thurnell-Read 2014). Recent fieldwork by one of us suggests that contemporary craft discourses introduce possibilities for women to re-shape established gender identities associated with craft brewing. As Luckman (2015a) argues, the craft revival is associated with the rise of home-based flexible employment as a neoliberal, pragmatic response to structural organizational inequalities that continue to systematically disadvantage women in formal workplaces. Yet the gendering of craft work is complex and often conflicting with some writers suggesting that the craft revival offers male workers and consumers a means of redressing the so-called 'crisis' of masculinity (Crawford

2009; Ocejo 2014). Hence it is our contention that the gendering of craft work, and the power relations that are reinforced through this, warrants greater critical scrutiny.

Craft work identities are also constructed within groups, networks and communities. Previous research into communities of practice focused on how knowledge is exchanged and collectively shared (Cook & Yanow 1993), including through conversation (Orr 1996). Communities of craft are based on work is not conductive to standardized procedures and involves physical experimentation (Orr 1996). Tacit and embodied knowledge are important resources in craft making that can be difficult to articulate through material and transferrable practices such as codes or expressed procedures (Toraldo et al. 2016). Craft knowledge is acquired through intimate physical engagement with objects and relies on perceptions and aesthetic subtleties, as a means of becoming accomplished in processes of making or doing. This is related to the idea of sharing by doing or acting (Castillo 2002; Hakanson 2007) and notions of embodied learning (Willems 2018). We therefore need to understand how knowledge operates within contemporary craft work organizations and the role of communities of practice in enabling this.

Meanings

The second theme through which organization studies can contribute to understanding craft work concerns its role a source of social and individual meaning. A key question that the craft revival raises is 'what kind of work makes life worth living?' (Dudley 2014: 6). Meaning is central to understanding craft work, as a way of making a living and a way of being (Terkel 1974). Contemporary craft discourses appeal to the desire for meaning in work by positioning labour as a source of existential or metaphysical meaning, as well as a way of making a living. This seductive notion recalls the Marxist ideal of un-alienated labour

through which workers can exercise the full extent of their humanity in a self-determining context (Marx 2000: 379ff). Modernist organizations are associated with the removal of meaning from work through the implementation of managerial logics of instrumental rationality (Thompson 1963) and worker deskilling (Braverman 1974).

The notion of enchantment refers to an experience that produces a sense of the mysterious, magical or imagined (Taylor & Bell 2011). Weber (1993) argued that modernity, rationality and science entail a process of disenchantment, whereby all aspects of life are experienced and understood as more knowable and manageable and therefore less mysterious. He predicted that enchantment would ultimately be eradicated through the growth of modernism and the rise of instrumental rationality, eventually denuding social and cultural life of the potential to generate meaning. The meaning of craft work is continually being mobilized and negotiated by producers and consumers via a set of complex social relations (Endrissat et al. 2015). This relies on a cultural production process wherein emotional meaning is positioned as central to acts of production (Thurnell-Read 2014) and consumption (Meamber 2014). Craft producers and consumers to report their 'love' for objects or express great enthusiasm for making and buying them (Endrissat et al. 2015).

Craft may therefore be understood as providing meaning through enchantment, as the basis for a form of re-enchantment in public life. This involves endorsement of a moral perspective that positions work as central to the maintenance of meaning (Suddaby et al. forthcoming). These authors argue that the craft resurgence implies that enchantment has not been completely rationalized out of existence. They suggest this is related to global economic shifts, including the 2008 global financial crisis, which has provoked a move towards craft work as a more viable form of commerce (Suddaby et al. forthcoming). However, it must be

remembered that this discourse is enacted within existing structural conditions, especially those related to ownership of the means of production.

Materiality

Our third theme relates to the importance of *materiality* in understanding craft work organization. Despite attempts to rationalise organized work in ways which imply the denial or removal of the body, we suggest that embodied signifiers of craft, in the form of the hand and the eye, remain as important symbolic presences in manufacturing and other types of organized work. The development of practice-based theories in organization studies draws attention to materiality, practices and embodiment, in contrast to cognition, as a way of explaining social action and order (Sandberg & Tsoukas 2016). Practice theory thereby provides a valuable basis for understanding craft work as a set of embodied practices, actions, materials and objects associated with making. This way of thinking challenges scientifically rational accounts of organization in favour of theories of organization that draw on the philosophy of Wittgenstein, Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger to account for our entwined relationship with matter. Recent development of new materialist thinking (Fox & Alldred 2017) furthers our understanding of the entangled nature of materiality through a relational epistemology that challenges traditional binaries of human/non-human, social/natural, mind/body in ways which destabilise conventional subject/object relations in organizational theory. It draws attention to the lively materiality of physical matter (Bennett 2010) and human interactions with it, as unable to be measured simply in terms of commodity exchange (Dudley 2014).

The practice turn in organization studies also chimes with the renewed focus on the body as a subject of study in disciplines like sociology (Shilling 2007), as a cultural medium of

communication. Shilling suggests that the reason for the oversight of the body as an absent-presence within sociology is because the discipline has focused predominantly on industrial structures and processes. Hence it has tended to overlook relationships between nature and culture which are the predominant concern of anthropology. This is not to say that social theorists like Marx and Weber were uninterested in the body, but that these writers predominantly positioned capitalism, and the structural and cultural forces with which it is associated, as alienating social actors from their embodied being (Shilling 2007). Similar arguments can also be made in the context of organization studies.

For Shilling, it is important that the body is not understood as a surface phenomenon that is inscribed upon (Foucault 1979); instead he uses the idea of body techniques to explore the *body pedagogics* through which the embodied subject is constituted within a culture. This is consistent with Wacquant's (2005: 446) sociology *from* the body which promotes the ethnographic study of bodily craft as the 'sociocultural competency residing in pre-discursive capacities that illuminate the embodied foundation of all practice'. As well as having methodological implications for how we should study craft work in a way which generates understanding of these features, such an approach focuses attention on the *visceral* nature of craft work organization as a lived and felt experience. The focus on materialities of craft work builds on existing research in organization studies, related to aesthetics as well as to the body, which highlights the importance of sensory knowledge as the basis for organizational coordination and learning (Strati 2007; Hindmarsh & Pilnick 2007). This presents exciting opportunities for the study of embodied practices of material engagement in craft work organization.

Crafting this book

By bringing together the contributors to this book to write about craft, we are also engaged in a form of craft work that results in the making of an object. For us, and we suspect for other researchers and academic writers, publishing a journal article is a qualitatively different experience that does not evoke the same responses as arise from crafting a book. The love that we have for books, and their role in nurturing our spiritual growth (Kiriakos & Tienari 2018), is an indication of their importance as a craft resource in academic work. We hope that this book is read as a demonstration of craft work.

This book seeks to develop an understanding of the diversity of craft work organization. Through the contexts and cultures covered, including Japan, United States, Italy, UK, Australia and France, the authors draw attention to the importance of place, space and time in situating craft work. Their analyses encompass craft work in a diverse range of contexts and sectors, from beer, sushi and wine making, to crafting handmade shoes, silk ties and bespoke perfumery. We see it as significant that many of the contributors represent craft visually, perhaps because photographs and pictures can sometimes capture the embodied, sensory, aesthetic and emotional qualities of craft better than words (Bell & Davison 2013).

Robin Holt and Yutaka Yamauchi's chapter explores the potential of nostalgia to return to a lost past via craft. Their chapter advances the notion that craft activities are imbued with emotional meanings, which appear as a collective reaction to mass-produced objects. Taking the case of traditional sushi bars, the authors posit that sushi is a craft product that recreates the past; nostalgia for a lost past is thus present in the experience of sushi which reproduces the qualities of traditional Japanese craft. Similarly, Solomon and Mathias also touch on aspects related to the meaningfulness associated with craftwork. Through in-depth interviews

with craft entrepreneurs in America, the authors argue that increasingly routinized, and depersonalized corporate jobs have paved the way to the emergence of craft entrepreneurship in the US. This not just a way of making a living but also a way of being and feeling anchored in the local context and tradition. The interplay between craft, authenticity and cultural legitimacy is object of analysis in Jennifer Smith Maguire's chapter. She focuses on the concept of authenticity associated with wine products, acknowledging that the term operates as a marker for market judgement that establishes the legitimacy of consumption. Her chapter provokes questions around the use of craft as marker of taste to promote alternative forms of (elite) consumption.

Susan Luckman and Jane Andrew illustrate the dynamics of home-based work within ccontemporary craft economy. This chapter describes the work of women who undertake self-employed craftwork as a way of overcoming the obstacles of managing family/motherhood and work in traditional organizations. The authors explore the ramifications of home-based work on women's identity and draw important implications related to the precarity of self-employment work-life balance. Based on a longitudinal study of niche perfumery, Claus Noppeney and Nada Endrissat's chapter connects to craft ideology and explores the inevitable ambiguity of craft products in contemporary capitalism. The authors interrogate whether craft offers a radical alternative to the big perfume industry or a superficial modification to consumerist culture. Maria Laura Toraldo, Stefano Consiglio and Gianluigi Mangia's chapter focuses on organizational identity in craft work and the role of place, local history and tradition. Using the case study of an elite tie maker in the Italian city of Naples, they show how the firm relies on collective memories based on local history and place to construct a distinctive organizational narrative. Chris Land, Neil Sutherland and Scott Taylor's chapter explores several themes associated with contemporary craftwork,

including the authenticity of artisanal products, cultural nostalgia toward a pre-industrial age, and the use of anachronistic gendered ideals in marketing craft products. Their chapter focuses on the craft beer industry, revealing a hyper-masculine culture and demonstrating how a pre-industrial, feminized craft became a male-dominated practice.

Nadine Waehning, Maria Karampela and Juho Pesonen provide an investigation into the definition of craft, revealing ambiguities inherent in craft terminology. With reference to craft beers, the authors explore consumers' interpretation of the term, 'craft', focusing on what 'authentic' means to them. Through their analysis, they shed light on the contested meaning of the craft label and reflect on the practical implications for the craft brewing industry. Nicola Thomas and Doreen Jakob address timely questions about local regeneration, specifically of rural areas, through the practice of craft. The authors look at the role of regional craft guilds in the South West of Britain and reveal the importance of membership within such associations. Employing the notion of 'community of practice', they argue that being part of a guild offers opportunities to local makers by enhancing their skills and abilities and attributing a mark of distinction to their work. Robert Ott continues this theme, through analysis of bespoke shoemaking in Canada. He emphasizes the contingent nature of craft work and its organization, drawing on Niklas Luhmann's arguments on objects in the world, to show the centrality of uncertainty to this way of making.

Ann Rippin and Sheena Vachhani's chapter takes the form of a dialogue on craft where the authors engage in a conversation on the potentiality of craft as a source of resistance. Craft is here indicated as a social progressive force and the authors unpack the concept of craftivism – a form of craft-based 'gentle resistance' – which represents a central resource for challenging organizational oppression and exploitation. Together the authors reflect on the

subversive potential of craft in contrast to the commodification of academic work. Hackney et al.'s chapter takes a similar position to several other chapters in this volume with regard to the relevance of history, tradition and cultural context, however they take a distinctive approach in discussing craft heritage as a resource for creation of a sense of community. Written by authors involved in the Maker-Centric project, a project to revitalize local areas through hand-making, the authors argue that the craft practice is a valuable means for engaging communities and working on issues related to diversity and inclusion.

The two concluding chapters in this edited collection provide shorter reflective commentaries on the state of craft work organization. Richard Blundel's historically-informed analysis focuses on the role of the past in defending and promoting craft practice and describes how organisations can make use of this history today.

A final thought to end on, and one reinforced by several chapters in this volume, concerns the elusiveness of craft work organization. Craft is characterized as a *practice* (e.g. Hackney et al.; Thomas and Jakob), an *object* (e.g. Endrissat and Noppeney), an *aesthetic ideal* (e.g. Smith Maguire), and a *profession* (e.g. Solomon and Mathias). Yet as these chapters further demonstrate, there are certain commonalities in the understandings of craft work - objects are 'made by hand', characterized by authenticity, and consumer choice is informed by judgements based on taste, rather than determined purely by economic logics. We believe that the richness and diversity that characterizes craft work organization, including differences in scale and size (from the home-making studio described by Luckman et al. to the family-based medium sized tie-maker described by Toraldo et al.), and variety of sectors and locales (from Holt and Yamauchi's illustration of Japanese craft sushi, to the Canadian hand-made shoes described by Ott), make the craft label highly eclectic and at the same time

very specific as a way of thinking about organization. This eclecticism enables new ways of thinking about organization, while its specificity enables a sense of craft work that endures.

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Front cover photograph of glassmaking from the With Love Project[xv] which documents the work of people who do things with passion and purpose.

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[i] We take the view that even if not etymologically gender-specific, the use of such gendered language as 'craftsman' reinforces the idea that women are marginal. We therefore use gender-neutral terms apart from in direct quotes.

[ii] 'How to Sharpen Pencils' (2013) by Pricefilms https://vimeo.com/60718161 [accessed 7 April 2017]

[iii] See http://www.ikea.com/my/en/catalog/categories/collections/34659/ [accessed 2 June 2017]

[iv] See https://www.brewdog.com/about/culture [accessed 9 February 2018]

[v] Hipster is a term that is used to refer to, usually well-educated, middle-class urban gentrifiers (Ocejo, 2017).

[vi] See McDonald's corporate YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kra1eWAiKvE [accessed 9 February 2018].

[vii] https://qz.com/571151/the-mast-brothers-fooled-the-world-into-buying-crappy-hipster-chocolate-for-10-a-bar/ [accessed 7 April 2017]

[viii] See http://www.mak.at/handicraft [accessed 9 February 2018]

[ix] This can be contrasted with former iterations of craft discourses such as the Arts and Crafts Movement which reproduced and reinforced a prevailing patriarchal ideology that restrained women (Callen, 1984). Leaders of that Movement failed to question the positioning of women as domestic, passive, and necessarily focused on reproductive labour.

[x] Cotton Spinning to return to Greater Manchester, BBC News, 2 December 2015 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-34984504 [accessed 7 April 2017]
[xi] Will Hutton 'If having more no longer satisfies us, perhaps we've reached "peak stuff"?', 31 January 2016, Guardian https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jan/31/consumerism-reached-peak-stuff-search-for-happiness [accessed 7 April 2017]
[xii] 'A Conversation on Craft Culture' with Kate Fletcher and Susan Luckman, CAMEo Research Institute for Cultural and Media Economies, University of Leicester, UK, 9 November 2016
[xiii] The art and craft of business, 4 January 2015, *The Economist* http://www.economist.com/news/business/21592656-etsy-starting-show-how-maker-movement-can-make-money-art-and-craft-business [accessed 19 April 2017]
[xiv] Etsy. (2013) Redefining Entrepreneurship: Etsy Sellers' Economic Impact. https://blog.etsy.com/news/files/2013/11/Etsy_Redefining-Entrepreneurship_November-2013.pdf [accessed 9th February 2018]
[xv] http://www.withloveproject.co.uk/ [accessed 9 February 2018]